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A NEW
TRANSLATION
OF
HORACE'S
ART of POETRY,
Attempted in RHYME.

By Mr. HENRY AMES.

Vade, sed incultus: ——— Ovid.

L O N D O N:

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T O

Arthur Onslow Esq;

S I R,



H E N I first resolv'd on this Translation of the Art of Poetry, some few Difficulties occur'd, which not only perplex'd, but almost deter'd me from the Attempt: for all my little Hopes were at once defeated, when I recollected that the inimitable ROSCOMON, the ingenious Mr. OLDHAM, and the Famous BEN JOHNSON had already preceded me in the same Performance: But there's a Bold and Enterprizing Spirit that reigns as well in the Poetick as Military Breast; the Muse would on, and I must own I was Ambitious of treading in those great Mens Steps, tho' sure of being thrown out in the Pursuit: ——— *Voluisse sat est.*

'Tis certain my Lord ROSCOMON has not only excel'd in Justness of Version, and Elegance of Style, but has given his Poet all the Natural Beauties and Genteel Plainness of the English Dress; and makes him shine (even now,) as distinguishably Bright in

A 2

our

our own Language, as he did near two Thousand Years ago in the Ancient Roman : But his Lordship rid with a slack Rein, and freed himself at once from all the Incumbrance and Perplexity of Rhime ; and sure it must be confess'd some Difficulty to be circumscrib'd to Syllables and Sounds : Mr. OLDHAM indeed, has very skilfully touch'd the Horatian Lyre, and work'd it into Musical Harmony ; but so moderniz'd the Poem, and reduc'd it to the Characters, and Standard of his own Time, that a Peevish Reader mayn't only be disgusted at Want of the Poetical History, but think himself priviledg'd to except against all such Freedoms in any one Translator but Mr. OLDHAM. BEN JOHNSON (with Submission to his Memory) by transgressing a most useful Precept, has widely differ'd from them both ; and trod so close upon the Heels of Horace, that he has not only cramp't, but made him halt in (almost) every Line : Then how must the Criticks be enrag'd, to see an Obscure Modern presumptuously thrusting in among this learn'd Triumvirate ? But, Sir, I still have this Comfort, that your Name is an Authority can silence Calumny, and your Approbation a Security against the most pointed Darts of Witty Malice and Ill-Nature.

*POESY, Sir, of all Arts, has certainly the best Pretensions to a great Man's Favour ; it cultivates the Genius, improves the Fancy, irradiates the Judgment, and seldom meets the Shock of a Rebuke, but from unpolish'd and ignoble Minds : and here (Sir) I have Justice on my Side for this Assertion ; no
sooner*

DEDICATION.

V

Sooner was I recommended to your Favour, than you honour'd me with your Friendship, took me under your Protection, and made my unhappy Fortune the Study of your Redress: An Instance of such Humanity, enhanc'd by Obligations since confer'd, demands Acknowledgment from an abler, but not more grateful Pen.

To dwell (Sir) upon your Goodness, would be to me a Task of Pleasure, but to the Publick (I fear) of Trouble; they seldom love Repetitions, and think it an Impertinence to relate what they're already but too well appriz'd of; you're Master of two Shining Qualities, that with unenvied Lustre stand distinguished among the Rest of your high Endowments; a Greatness of Soul that ennobles all your Actions, and a Graceful Modesty in being Deaf to the Praises of your Admirers: You sit (Sir) for your Picture to Advantage, you please in all Lights; and it would be Injustice to throw into Shade what affords such happy Opportunities of Improvement and Imitation: He's a wretched Painter who subscribes to his Copy the Name of his Original, and the World (I dare say) will be soon apt to judge, that, whenever an illustrious Patriot, a sincere Friend, a fine Gentleman, and an Honour to our Constitution, fall under the Poet's Description, he has luckily hit off the Character of Mr. ONSLOW.

What a Pity is it (Sir) that Flattery should carry an Appearance so analogous to that of Truth? but 'tis easy to discover the Charms of the real Beauty, from the coarse Disguise and paultry Glare of the Painted Idol: 'tis Noble, that you can
Boast

vi DEDICATION.

Boast the Virtues of your ANCESTRY, but nobler far, that you please by the Merits of your own: This evidently appears from the unanimous Consent of a generous County, that thought it an Honour to court your Condescension in Choice of a Representative. Your Abilities shine thro' every Province you undertake, in which the Loyalty of your Heart is always so faithfully express'd, and urg'd with such a Strength of Judgment, that your Common Arguments seem enforc'd with all the Poignancy and concerted Order of a learn'd Oration.

This Poem (Sir) pleads a twofold Right to your Patronage; First, your Pre-eminence of Birth and Education; secondly, your Approbation of that Art which it so Variously and Delicately treats of: and should it prove so Fortunate as to employ your Leisure at some unbended Hour, when the Fatigue of Business is over, and the Publick has reap'd the Benefit of your Labours, I shall think my self more than amply recompenc'd by your receiving it into your Protection, and permitting me this envied Opportunity of subscribing my self with greatest Duty and Respect, (Sir,)

Your most Obedient

And most Obliged

Humble Servant,

HENRY AMES.



P R E F A C E.



PRODUCTIONS of this *Nature* seldom thrust themselves into the World without *Obloquy* and *Detraction*: for this Reason, therefore I give both the Reader and my self this *prefatory* Trouble: I am no ways insensible what *Censure* I provoke by this Publication; for 'tis a *Misfortune* great as the *Presumption* to follow *learned* Pens: And he, who labours under this *Disadvantage*, has not only the whole *Host* of profess'd *Criticks* to engage, but must be subjected to innumerable *Severities* from every little ignorant Pretender to the *Faculty*: The former, I must own, (like *Skilful Executioners*) dispatch a Man with *Judgment*; the latter, clumsily perform their *Office*, and tho' incapable to *reach* the *Vitals*, still keep him *lingring* under the *Tortures* of a *blunted Knife*.

I have kept as *close* to the *Original* as possible; and hope it will not be *imputed* to me, that I have
either

either *varied, borrowed, or stole*; I think that I have *much the better of the Crow in the Fable*, and may *boldly say, no Mortal has a Right to challenge or pluck out one single Feather from among all my Plumage*, without manifestly *invading my Property*.

I beg leave to inform the Reader, that I have omitted *Twelve Lines* in this Translation, beginning at

Syllaba longa brevi, &c.

and ending at

Aut ignoratæ premit Artis Crimine Turpi.

And to salve all *Objections* for this *Omission*, I refer him to the *Reasons* of my Lord Roscomon and Mr. Oldham for their *Non-Performance* of the same; and if it be alledg'd *Presumptuous* in me, to *copy* after such *incomparable Masters*, it must needs be thought much *more so*, shou'd I *but in any Manner attempt* what they judg'd proper to *let alone*. Be my *Fate* what it will, I meet it with *Resolution*; I am arm'd against all *Reflection*, and can stand *Satyr* unconcerned: if I *please*, 'tis *more* than I expect; if I *pass unreprouch'd*, as *much* as I desire.

—*Vitavi deniq; Culpam,*
Non Laudem merui——





A NEW
TRANSLATION
OF
HORACE'S *Art of Poetry*.

SHOULD some unskilful Painter undertake
To join a human Head and Horse's Neck,
Or sketch the Figure of some monstrous Beast,
With diff'rent Limbs and various Feathers drest ;
Or should a filthy Fish's Tail disgrace
Th' attractive Sweetness of a Female Face,

2 *A New TRANSLATION of*

Tell me, my Friends, could such a motly Scene
Engage your Eyes, and not provoke your Spleen?

BELIEVE me (*Pifos*) that a Poem writ
With rambling Turns of incoherent Wit,
Strongly resembles such a Piece; and seems
Like wav'ring Images of sick Mens Dreams,
Where neither Nature is observ'd nor Art,
But wild Confusion glares thro' ev'ry Part:
Painters and Poets dare uncommon Flights,
One draws as unconfin'd as t'other writes;
Why 'tis allow'd; and in return we crave
The same Indulgence we let others have:
But to suppose the Serpent and the Dove
Should strike a League, be reconcil'd, and love,
That wide Extreame should amicably join,
The savage Tyger and the Lamb combine,
Is out of Nature, and the Compass of Design.

IN

HORACE'S *Art of Poetry.* 3

IN Works, that promise more than common Care,
 Some shining Strokes diffusively appear ;
 As when loose Fancy in excursive Strain
 Describes *Diana's* sacred Grove or Fane,
 Or gliding Streams that wash enamel'd Meads,
 The headlong *Rhine*, or *Iris'* various Shades ;
 But Flights ill-tim'd, and misapply'd like these,
 Officiously crowd in, unworthy Place.

IN Sketch of Trees, I grant you may excel ;
 But what avails this trifling piece of Skill,
 When the swol'n Surge, and roaring Winds com-
 The bold Performance of a Master's Hand, [mand
 And a wreck'd Crew swim scarce alive to Land ?
 Where Fancy opens with some labour'd Scene,
 What makes the Draught end scandalous and mean ?
 Let the same beauteous Order still controul,
 Shine thro' each Part, and animate the Whole.

4 *A New* TRANSLATION of

Most Poets (*sacred Sirs*) are apt to stray,
Led by some gay delusive Light away ;
Affecting Shortness, we become obscure,
Perplex our Thoughts, or make the Diction poor ;
Some, idly fond, to polish and refine,
Want Strength and Nerves to make Improvement
Others, in lofty Numbers toil to rise, [shine ;
And strain at the Sublime, but swell to Noise ;
Or fearful to engage the Tempest's Roar,
With servile Caution creep along the Shore :
Some, from a strange Propensity to rove,
Paint Boars in Water, Dolphins in a Grove :
Thus thro' ill Judgment we run blindly on,
And plunge in Vices that we strive to shun.

THE worst Engraver in th' *Emilian* Place,
Can strike the Nails, or give the Hair a Grace ;

But

But wants a Genius, and the Pow'r of Art
To guide the Whole, and finish ev'ry Part :
This seems to me as scandalous a Case,
As if some monstrous Feature should disgrace
The Beauties of a fine-proportion'd Face.

You, who the Flights of boundless Fancy dare,
First let your Judgment in your Choice appear ;
Nor let your Subject over-match your Wit,
But see how far th' advent'rous Task you fit ;
Examine ev'ry Nerve, each Sinew well,
What Weight they can sustain, and where they fail ;
For he, who ne'er attempts beyond his Skill,
Has Words in comely Train, and Wit at Will.

To time Things justly, and defer a Part,
Shews Master-Excellence, and Test of Art ;

'Tis

6 *A New TRANSLATION of*

'Tis a nice Point, and of important Use,
To know what to reject, and what to chuse :
In choice of Terms be sparing, and with Care
Avoid such novel Sounds as grate the Ear ;
Applause you justly may expect to gain,
If apt Connection renders new Words plain.

BUT if you needs must write of Things unknown,
And start new Words and Phrases of your own,
A modest Freedom best directs the Pen,
And gives Authority to what you feign ;
Yet so derive your Terms, that all may know
Greece is the Spring whence sparingly they flow :
Shall *Rome* dislike th' immortal *Maro's* Wit,
Yet praise what *Plautus* or *Cacilius* writ ?
Since *Cato's* Muse, and *Ennius'* artless Song,
With store of Words enrich'd their native Tongue,

Why

Why should not I with like Indulgence write,
 And ranfack Art to bring new Words to Light?
 Words aptly fuited to the Times and Men,
 Have ever been allow'd, and fhall agen.

As Autumn yearly fweeps the Leaves away,
 And the next Spring fupplies the late Decay;
 So Words, infirm with Age, fall off apace,
 Whilft new rife up, and flourish in their Place;
 Death is the certain Fate of Things below,
 All fhare the Ruin, all partake the Blow:
 The labour'd Mole encroaches on the Sea,
 Protects whole Fleets, and ftands in *Boreas*' Way,
 And where the barren Lake once drown'd the Plain,
 Now rifing Harvefts wave with bending Grain,
 Feed neighb'ring Towns, and blefs the Plowman's
 [Pain:

The

8 *A New TRANSLATION of*

The swelling *Tyber* taught a gentler Course,
 Rolls on unmindful of his antient Shores,
 Bane of the thriving Corn, and springing Flow'rs :
 Yet all these Works of Nature must decay,
 Then how should Words be more exempt than they?
 Many, which now the present Age decries,
 Shall in the next with Approbation rise ;
 Others, grown old in Fame and high Request,
 In the succeeding Age shall be suppress'd,
 So much can Custom like a Tyrant awe
 The Race of Words, and give a Language Law.

IN bold Heroicks *Homer* first begun
 The dreadful Tale of Battles lost and won,
 He sung of Kings, and their renown'd Exploits,
 The Routs of Armies, and the Chance of Fights.

WHEN

WHEN plaintive Elegy first limp'd along,
Sad was her Lay, and mournful was her Song;
Now, to more sprightly Notes she forms her Voice,
Describes our Pleasures, and relates our Joys;
Yet, first what Author found this Metre out,
Has long been bandy'd, and is still a Doubt.

PROVOK'D by Rage, *Archilochus* first try'd
Iambick Verse, (a furious Muse his Guide,)
A Measure priz'd, and in succeeding Days
Worthy the Stage, and introduc'd in Plays;
Suiting the Turn of Dialogue, and fit
For Action, and to quell a clam'rous Pit.

A nobler Theme the *Lyrick* Muse inspires,
To *Gods* and *Sons of Gods* her Song aspires;
She crowns the Victor with immortal Praise,
Or paints the Courser foremost in the Race;

10 *A New TRANSLATION of*

Thence to more frolick Mirth her Lays incline,
And blend the sportive Tales of Love and Wine.

IF Precept fails t'instruct and Method's vain,
Why should I boast my self of *Phæbus*' Train,
And think the Prize without the Toil to gain?
Or indiscreetly modest, rather chuse
T'expose my Judgment than improve my Muse?

A Comick Tale won't bear a tragick Dress,
Nor can *Thyestes* speak in comick Phrase;
To ev'ry thing assign its proper Place.

YET, Comedy sometimes her Flights may claim,
And angry *Chremes* kindle into Flame;
And Tragedy alternately may fall
From lofty Notes, and tell an humble Tale;
When *Peleus* mourns, or *Telephus* complains,
Each quits his Bombast, and high pompous Strains,

To

HORACE'S *Art of Poetry.* 11

To sooth an Audience to partake his Moan,
Give Sigh for Sigh, and utter Groan for Groan.

'Tis not enough that in your Poems shine
Gay Beauties, tempting Sweetness must combine ;
The ravish'd Ears must lead the willing Heart,
Charm'd with the Force of Nature and of Art.

As Grief grows mutual, Joy produces Joy,
For Face to Face conveys strong Sympathy ;
Would you that I should in your Sorrow share ?
Begin, and let your Troubles first appear,
'Tis then to soft Compassion I incline,
Then Fancy works, and all your Conflict's mine :
Yet should you speak the Part you play, amiss, }
Or lay on Words improper Emphasis, }
I sleep or laugh at such Absurdities : }
The Cholerick must rage, the Sad complain,
The Grave be serious, and the Frolick vain ;

12 *A New TRANSLATION of*

For *Nature* fashions first the Soul to take
Impression from each Turn our Fortunes make ;
By Joy we're ravish'd, humbled by Distress,
Rage forms a wild Disorder in the Face :
Then, as the Passions differently prevail,
The Tongue displays th' Emotions that we feel ;
And he, whose Language suits not with his State,
Provokes alike the *Vulgar* and the *Great*.

It much imports, if *Gods* or *Heroes* speak,
The grave-fac'd Elder, or the young Town-Rake,
The wealthy Matron, or the hireling Maid,
The clownish Peasant, or the Man of Trade,
Assyrian, Argive, Theban or a *Mede*.

GROUND whatsoe'er you write on History,
Or let your Fiction with it self agree ;
If fam'd *Achilles* should employ your Pen,
Let him appear all Passion, Rage, and Spleen,
Inexorable,

Inexorable, rough, the Sword his Law,
 Born to chastise and keep the World in Awe ;
 Let fierce *Medea* shew remorseless Hate,
 Let *Ino* weep, *Ixion* use Deceit,
Iō must rove, *Orestes* mourn his Fate.

}
 }
 }

BUT if your daring Genius will engage
 To form new Scenes and Persons for the Stage,
 Still thro' the Whole let the same Tenor run,
 Nor mix your Parts, but end as you begun.

INVENTION'S a fatiguing Task, that few
 But with peculiar Judgment manage true:
 'Tis safer far from *Homer's* Page to chuse,
 Than trust a young and unexperienc'd Muse:
 The publish'd Labour of another's Pen
 May pass for yours, if you discreetly glean ;
 Nor dwell on Points too trifling and absurd,
 Nor match Translation justly Word for Word:

Nor

14 *A New TRANSLATION of*

Nor wedge your self up in a narrow Pass,
 Whence you can ne'er retreat without Disgrace,
 Nor like the *Cyclic*-Bard commence your Song,
I sing great Priam's War twice five Years long;
 To what must all our Expectation turn?
 The *Mountains* labour, and a *Mouſe* is born;
 How more correctly does the *Poet* write,
 His Manner easy, and his Style polite?
 Begin, O Muse! and help me to relate
Ulyſſes' wand'ring Toils since *Troy's* Defeat;
 No glaring Flash at first confounds your Eyes,
 No Smoke from Flames, but Flames from Smoke
 [arise,
 By gradual Heat the well-chose Subject's wrought
 To all the Fire and Energy of Thought;
 Then with surprizing Art he strikes the Ear,
 Here paints *Charybdis*, *Polyphemus* there;
 Here *Scylla's* drawn with all her barking Train,
 There Monarchs feast on Limbs of mangled Men;
 Nor

Nor hints he once at *Meleager's* Fall,
 When *Diomed's* Return employs his Tale,
 Nor runs a tiresome Story back as far
 As *Leda's* Eggs, to sing the *Trojan* War;
 Still to th' Event he hastes, in ev'ry Line
 Makes you familiar with his whole Design,
 And what his Judgment oft in vain has try'd
 To raise into a Beauty, throws aside;
 Nay, with such Art, such Care the Fable's wrought,
 Fiction and Truth so wove into the Plot,
 'Tis hard to judge what's real, what is not.

If you expect your Audience should extol
 The Muses Toil, and wait the Curtain's Fall,
 Observe this Rule, for it was ever true,
 To ev'ry Age a just Decorum's due,
 And as our Years advance, their Manner's new.

CHILDREN,

16 *A New TRANSLATION of*

CHILDREN, when taught to speak and go, rejoice
To mix in Pleasures with coæval Boys,
From Sport to Sport their wav'ring Passions run,
Provok'd without a Cause, and pleas'd as soon.

THE beardless Youth from pedant Tutor freed,
Sports with his Dogs, and sounds his Courser's Speed;
To Precept furly, and to Pleasure prone,
Pliant as Wax for Vice to touch upon;
Scornful of Gain, and lavish in Expence,
Full of Opiniatry, devoid of Sense,
Sudden to Change, by new Temptations fir'd,
And quits with Joy what he with Joy desir'd.

WHEN Judgment, Sense, and manly Age take
[Place,
And Reason ripens as our Years increase,
Urg'd by Ambition, with incessant Pain
We drudge for Honour, and we slave for Gain,
By Caution wisely sway'd, consult how far
Our present Actions save our future Care.

WHAT

WHAT a long Race of *Plagues* attend old Years?
 Hopes to possess, and with Possession, Fears;
 Distrust, Ill-Nature, slothful Management,
 Fondness of Life, Reflection, Discontent,
 Censure of Youth, Esteem of what is past,
 Contempt of Pleasures they want Pow'r to taste;
 Thus as our *Youth* runs on, our Joys increase,
 'Till *Age* comes limping in, and checks the Race.

ACTIONS of Manhood are for *Age* unfit,
 And childish Parts on *Youth* unaptly fit,
 To proper Adjuncts let each *Age* submit. }
 The *Stage*, whose Sanction we depend upon,
 Presents things doing, or relates 'em done;
 We're sooner mov'd with what we *see*, than *hear*, }
 Spectators rather trust the *Eye* than *Ear*;
 Truths by the *Sight* convey'd, are ever clear. }

YET all Absurdities must fly the Scene,
 Which Reason tells us should be done within;

D

For

18 *A New TRANSLATION of*

For what the *Eyes* with a just Scorn reject,
If well *related*, has a fine Effect :

Let not *Medea* in Despair and Rage
Mangle her living Infants on the Stage ;
Nor foul *Thyestes* in the publick View
Devour his Sons that bloody *Atreus* slew,
Nor *Cadmus* to a *Snake* transform'd appear,
Nor *Swallows* Wings bear *Progne* thro' the Air ;
Whate'er you thus obtrude upon my *Eye*,
Provokes my Rage, and seems a labour'd Lye,

FIVE Acts, nor more nor less, compleat a Play,
This gains an Audience for a second Day ;
Yet, let no God (but on some grand Design
Worthy the Presence of a God) come in ;
Nor swell your Number on the Stage to four,
The Laws of Action warrant three, no more ;

A manly Part the Chorus must maintain,
No Songs between the Acts should intervene,
But what exactly suit the Plot and Scene :

Let

Let the just Actions of the Virtuous shine,
Passion be rein'd, and *Friendship* held divine,
 Here the sweet Blessings of pacifick Days,
 Thrift, and impartial Justice must have Praise,
 The Faithful be extoll'd, and Heav'n implor'd,
 That Pride may fall, and Virtue be restor'd.

No Flute, nor Trumpet, grac'd the ancient Scene,
 But Pipes whose Stops were few, and Model plain;
 Such gain'd Applause, and pleas'd in former Days,
 When Folks lov'd Thrift, and few frequented Plays.

BUT since *Rome's* mighty Strength has rais'd her
 [Fame,
 And Conquest spread where-e'er her *Eagles* came,
 Since Men uncensur'd revel Life away,
 And the large *Goblet* crowns each jovial Day,
 The licens'd *Bards* in bolder Numbers sing,
 The Voice is taught, and joins th' harmonious String,

20 *A New TRANSLATION of*

For e'er the *Box* divided from the *Pit*,
How could a mix'd Assembly judge of Wit,
The *Clown*, the *Beau*, the *Courtier*, and the *Cit*?

THEN graceful Motion, and a pompous Dress
Gave to the growing Stage deserv'd Success,
The Lyre in more melodious Style was heard,
And Art in all its Luxury appear'd;
With manly Sense sweet Elocution flow'd,
And spoke prophetick as the *Delphick* God.

HE, who at first in tragick Numbers wrote
(When the poor Poet labour'd for a Goat)
Brought in his naked Satyrs to divert,
And mix'd the comick with the serious Part;
For wild Variety and burlesque Wit
Best entertain'd a lawless drunken Pit.

YET, it requires the utmost Stretch of Care,
T' avoid the ridiculing Things *severe*:

Nor

Nor must your *Heroes*, or your *Gods* who shone
 Circled with all the Glories of a *Throne*,
 Throw by their Style of *Majesty* with Dress;
 Or sink to *vulgar* and ignoble Phrase;
 Nor yet to shun the *Dregs* of Language, rise
 To frothy Bombast and affected Noise;
 The tragick Muse scorns mean and humble Strains,
 As a chaste *Matron* justly takes Offence,
 To mix with *Satyrs* in a mimick Dance.

IMMODEST Language I can ne'er admit,
 Ev'n *Satyr* blushes at immodest Wit;
 Nor be so blind, as not to judge with Care
 The proper Diff'rence 'twixt each Character;
 As whether *Davus* forms some sly Discourse,
 Or *Pythias* bilks old *Simo* of his Purse:
 Or if *Silenus*, with instructive Nod,
 Severely grave, directs his Pupil God.

22 *A New TRANSLATION of*

'Tis no great Matter tho' my Subject's known,
 Invention shall confirm it for my own ;
 And all shall find who emulate my Strain,
 Their Hope successless, and their Labour vain ;
 With so much Beauty, such a comely Grace,
 The meanest Things appear in proper Place.

LET no wild *Satyrs* nurs'd up in the *Woods*,
 With awkward *Gestures*, and unseemly *Modes*,
 Converse in Phrase superior to their *Sort*,
 And strain at Words peculiar to the *Court* ;
 Nor must their Language be *obscenely* loose,
 Larded with *Smut*, or *Bawdry* of the Stews ;
 Such hits the vulgar Taste, but gives Offence
 To courtly Breeding, and distinguish'd Sense ;
 For how can Men of *Worth* and *Parts* applaud
 The *low Diversions* of the *servile* Crowd ?

'Tis

'Tis a *peculiar Talent* to descry
 The *Clash* of *unharmonious* Poesy :
 In this the Bards of *Rome* supinely err,
 Too great Indulgence makes 'em void of Care;
 Therefore shall I (regardless of my Fame)
 Write without Limits, and transgress with them?
 And confidently think that all who see
 The Frailties of my *Muse*, must pardon me?
 'Tis true, I barely may avoid *Disgrace*,
 But quit all Probability of *Praise*.

PLACE the *Greek* Authors chiefly in your View,
 Such bright Examples Night and Day pursue.

IN the foregoing Age (when *Plautus* writ,) }
 Bare Pun and Quibble past for Standard Wit, }
 His Numbers too for such quaint Jest were fit; }
 And (not t' arraign their fond Admirer's Sense)
 Pleas'd, and were bore with, to no small Offence:

24 A New TRANSLATION of

If you or I dare challenge so much Skill,
To judge when Wit is true, or Verse genteel,
Or if our Ears and Fingers can descry
Harsh grating Sounds from mellow Harmony.

WHEN *Thespis* first profess'd the *tragick* Art,
Coarse was his Language, and his Stage a *Cart*,
Smear'd with the Lees of Wine, his Actors sung
In *antick* Mood, to draw the gaping Throng:
Then *Æschylus* brought Masks and Habit in,
Refin'd their *Manner*, and contriv'd a *Scene*,
With comelier Port the buskin'd *Hero* mov'd,
Trod' with more Grace, and as he spoke, improv'd.

NEXT, Comedy came forth, approv'd by most,
But by the Freedom that she took, was lost;
Laws were enforc'd to bridle in her Tongue,
Silence the Chorus, and redress the Wrong:

Our

Our *modern* Authors labour'd various Ways,
And well deserv'd, what they so toil'd for, Praise ;
Who scorn'd to copy from the *Grecian* Loom,
And sung the glorious Acts of warlike *Rome* :
Nor had the *Mistress* of the World appear'd
More fam'd for *Arms*, than for her *Arts* rever'd,
Had we but Patience to correct and file
Th' unpolish'd Rough-draught of our *Muses* Toil.

BUT you (POMPILIAN SONS) condemn each
Where Care and Judgment don't correctly shine, ^{[Line,}
Where utmost Labour ha'nt improv'd each Thought,
Beyond the *Critick's* Pow'r to spy a *Fault*.

SINCE shrewd *Democritus* affirms that none
Unless stark mad should taste of *Helicon*,
That *Wit* (without th' Embellishment of Art)
In writing well is an *essential* Part,
The Notion spreads ; and all the Scribling Crew
Grown pregnant with the Whim, believe it true :
Some neither shave, nor cut their Nails, and some
T' avoid the Publick, live recluse at Home ;

26 *A New TRANSLATION of*

For nothing recommends a Poet more,
Than to be past the Cure of *Hellebore*.

Ah me! what curst unhappy Planet shed
Its baleful Influence on my luckless Head?

Who yearly purge my Spleen, else none could write
Verse more elaborate, or so polite;

Yet in my Judgment, 'tis not half so bad
To be no *Poet*, as reputed mad;

Tho' I can't write, I'll teach; and like the *Hone*
Give others *Edge*, tho' I my self have none;

Shew where the Poet's Talents should excel,
What diff'rent Ways conspire to writing well,

How artful Methods best dispose the Thought,
Whence the *Materials* for a Play are sought,

Tell where a *Virtue* lies; and where a *Fault*.

IN writing well, sound Judgment must preside;
To Choice of Themes *Philosophy's* your Guide;
And where you understand your Subject well,
Your Words flow unconstrain'd, your *Thoughts* excel:

HE

HE, who of Life each Duty understands,
 What his dear *Country*, or his *Friend* demands,
 What different Piety should warm his Breast
 Tow'rd a fond *Parent*, *Brother*, or a *Guest*,
 Skill'd to *provoke*, or press the Foe in Fight,
 Sage in the *Senate*, on the *Bench* upright,
 Betrays a Genius certain of Success,
 And gives each Draught he forms, its proper Grace.

MAKE *human* Life the Object of your Pains,
 Keep close to that, and *image* thence your *Scenes*;
 Sometimes in Plays of little Weight and Art,
 A well-hit *Character*, or hum'rous Part,
 Shall take an Audience better than a Scene,
 Where empty labour'd Sounds come *foisted* in.

GREECE had a *noble* Genius, *Greece* had Wit,
 And Eloquence for ev'ry Purpose fit,
 For *Fame* she fought, for *Fame* alone she writ:
 But *Rome*, regardless of such *grand* Designs,
 Led by mean Views, the *noble* Toil declines;

28 *A New TRANSLATION of*

Her Sons in different Sciences expert,
 Divide a Farthing to the hundredth Part;
Albinus, grown proficient in Accounts,
 Subtracts, and proves to what each *Sum* amounts;
 The *Muckworm* Sire (t'indulge his *Lubbard* Son)
 Cries, hopeful Youth! thou'lt surely keep thy own;
 Where once the *Soul's* so rivetted to Gain,
 How can it reach the high *immortal* Strain,
 And nobly propagate a learned Vein?

POETS should please or else instruct the Mind,
 Or give us Pleasure with Instruction join'd.

LET all your Precepts be succinctly pen'd,
 They're sooner learn'd, more faithfully retain'd;
 Superfluous Things are apt to slip the Mind,
 Th' Impression faintly struck, scarce stays behind;

WHATEVER hum'rous Character y'invent,
 Let it but barely from the Truth dissent;
 Nor be too confident, and think you may
 Oblige an Audience to believe your Play;

Nor

Nor represent an Action so absurd,
 As giving *Life* to Children just *devour'd*;
Age most affects grave *edifying* Wit,
 And *Youth* dislikes what's too *austerely* writ;
 But he, whose Labours both instruct and please,
 Carries all Votes, and may command Success;
 His Works ne'er lie as Lumber, but proclaim
 Thro' distant Climes their Author's deathless Name.

YET, there are *trivial* Faults, in which a Muse
 May be indulg'd, and plead a fair Excuse;
 The best *Musician* with his utmost Care
 May strike a Note ungrateful to the *Ear*;
 And *Marksmen* of unquestionable Fame,
 Are known to shoot aside, and miss their *Aim*:
 But where a *Train* of Excellencies flow,
 I'm not offended at a *Slip* or two;
 If no *broad* Faults pure *Negligence* proclaim,
 And *human* Nature only is to blame;
 But when the kind Entreaty of a Friend
 Is lost upon a Wretch that *bates* to mend;

30 *A New TRANSLATION of*

Who can excuse th' incorrigible *Sot*?

Who (*Fidler-like*) still murd'ring the same Note,

In vain makes fresh Attempts, and still is out.

YET if by Chance, some *lucky* Thought appears
Amongst a Multitude of *scoundrel* Verse,
I'm pleas'd to see it; yet provok'd agen
When but a *Trifle* falls from *Homer's* Pen;
But where an Author *swells* into a Size,
Why should a Nod, or gentle Sleep surprize?

POEMS resemble *Pictures*, some deny
Too *close* a Judgment, others *court* the Eye;
This *Piece* receives Advantage from the Night,
That with Assurance asks for open Light,
And dares the most judicious *Critick's* Sight:
Some *Poems* scarce can bear a *second* View,
Others, tho' often read, are *always* new.

THO' you're (*great Sir*) by Dint of Nature wise,
Tho' form'd by faultless Rules and sage Advice,

Yet

Yet ne'er let this Instruction be forgot,
 Some things admit a *Mean*, but Verse will not ;
 The *Lawyer* pleads who wants *Messala's* Sense
 To smoothe the knotty Law with Eloquence ;
 Nay, gains his Point, and merits some Applause,
 Tho' short of learn'd *Cassellius* in the Laws ;
 But the poor Poet stands a *diff'rent* Test,
 Works in *Extremes*, the *vilest*, or the *best* :
 No golden *Mean* directs the *Muse's* Flight,
 Doom'd by the *Gods* to flit in endless Night,
 Or soar *supreme*, and pierce the Realms of Light. }

As a *Ragoust*, or *Olio* rankly drest,
 Abates the *poignant* Relish of a Feast,
 And Musick, *tortur'd* by unskilful Hands,
 (Which might much better be excus'd) offends,
 So Poesy, whose main Intent's Delight,
 If barely short of Fancy's labour'd Height,
 Sinks to the low exploded Dregs of Wit. }

TH' un-

32 *A New TRANSLATION of*

TH' untow'rdly Youth in martial Sports unskill'd,
Declines th' *Olympick* Games and dusty Field ;
And he, who wants *Dexterity* and *Slight*
To pitch the Bar, or toss the circling Coit,
(Conscious, an ill Performance must incense
The *grinning Crowd*) forbears to give Offence ;
In Verse 'tis diff'rent, ev'ry *Fool* will write,
Why not ? he's rich, a *Freeman*, nay a *Knight* ;
Can boast the *Depth* and *Treasure* of his Chest,
Aw'd by no Conflict of a *guilty* Breast.

BUT your Discretion, *Piso*, will dissuade
From writing without *Nature's* kindly Aid :
Yet, should you once invoke the sacred *Nine*,
And beg their *Blessings* on your Works may shine,
Let *Critick Metius* first approve your Piece,
Your *Father's* Voice, nay *mine* won't be amiss,
Nor let a Labour of your *Pen* come forth,
Till *nine* Years Space has amply prov'd its Worth,
You mend at Leisure what you ne'er make known,
There's no return of Words once *spoke*, they're gone.

ORPHEUS

ORPHEUS at first by pow'rful Sound subdu'd
 Man's savage Nature and his Thirst of Blood;
 For this the *Bard divine* was said t'assuage
 The *Tyger's* Fury, and the *Lion's* Rage;
 The *List'ning* Stones obey'd *Amphion's* Call,
 Danc'd to his *Lute*, and form'd the *Theban* Wall.

POETS, once deem'd a *wise* and prudent *Race*,
 Adjusted all Things with becoming Grace,
 By *Precept* shap'd, and first instructed Man
 To judge 'twixt *sacred* Actions and *profane*,
 Suppress'd *wild* Lust, and link'd the *nuptial* Chain:
 Plan'd out great Towns, and instituted Laws,
 Hence *Verse* was fam'd, and Poets gain'd Applause.

IN *martial* Sounds next *Homer* sung Alarms,
 And with *Tyrtæus* rowz'd the World to Arms;
 Fate's dark Results, and the *Decrees* of Stars
 Were handed down from *Heav'n* in hallow'd Verse,

34 A New TRANSLATION of

In sacred *Numbers Virtue* throve apace,
Shone more divine, and charm'd with brighter Grace,
Kings too were courted in *poetick* Strains,
And *Past'ral* solac'd the laborious Swains;
Then (*Piso*) why asham'd to own *your* Skill,
Since *Kings* and *Gods* protect the *sacred* Quill?

'Tis doubted much, if *Poesy* can boast
Advantages from *Art* or *Nature* most;
But were I chosen *Umpire* to discuss
So *delicate* a Point, I'd solve it thus;
Art without *Nature* is meer counterfeit,
And *Nature* without *Art* is unpolite,
Both must in *mutual* Harmony combine,
To give *Perfection* to a *grand* Design.

H E, who desires the wish'd-for *Goal* to reach,
Must put his *Sinews* to the utmost Stretch,
Be *gently* breath'd, by Turns grow warm and cool,
Quit *Wine* and *Woman*, and conform to Rule;

The

The sweetest Voice that *chaunts Apollo's Praise*,
 First learn'd, and reach'd *Perfection* by Degrees;
 But 'tis sufficient now-a-days to cry
 Pray who writes *better Poesy* than I?
 Confound the *hindmost*, I'll ne'er lag behind,
 My *Muse* is ready, and *Apollo* kind;
 'Twere *Madness* sure to own my Want of Skill,
 And throw by *all* Pretensions to the Quill.

As *wealthy* Tradesmen bribe the *Bellman's* Voice
 To force the *Sale* of damag'd Merchandise,
 So the *rich* Poet, whose extended Plains
 Yield large Increase, and multiply his Gains,
 Ne'er wants a *purchas'd* Friend r'admire his Strains.
 And tho' such *Fondlings* of Applause will treat,
 Give Bail to Actions, or discharge a Debt,
 'Tis rare the *Friend's* distinguish'd from the *Cheat*.

BUT whether (*Piso*) it is your Intent
 To be *presented* to, or to *present*,

36 *A New TRANSLATION of*

Scorn the *false* Glos of *venal* Praise, and fly
 The *loud* applauding Knave brim-full of Joy;
Meanly judicious he extols each Thought,
 Swears you're inimitable, without Fault,
 Most sacred, most divine, and most—what not;
 Here he grows *pale*, there stamps with *feign'd*
 Here weeps for Joy at some new Stroke of Wit;
 [Delight,
 As Mourners hir'd to *force* a faithless Tear,
 Seem more concern'd than they whose Grief's sincere,
 So *flatt'ring* Knaves in *louder* *Io's* join
 Than they who *justly* praise without Design.

PRINCES of old, ply'd the *capacious* Bowl
 To *sound* the Friend, and *search* into his Soul;
 In Verse beware; nor let the *glozing* Tongue
 With *artful* Praise betray you into Song;

SUBMIT your Writings to *Quintilius'* Care,
 You'll find him as *judicious* as *sincere*;

He'll

He'll (like a Friend) instruct you what to do,
 What must be *polish'd*, what be *wrought* a-new;
 But should your *Errors* after frequent Toil
 And strong Endeavours still elude the File,
 He'd dash 'em out, and vote your Labour vain,
 'Till the *whole* Piece were quite struck o'er agen;
 Should you persist, and stubbornly defend
 Your *Faults*, and rather keep 'em than your *Friend*
 He'd urge no more, but bid you strait be gone,
 And dote *unrival'd* on your self alone.

THE frank good natur'd Man condemns each Line
 Where *Judgment* flags, or *Beauty* spares to shine,
 Lops each *luxuriant* Ornament of Wit,
 And bids you brighten what's obscurely writ,
 Clear up a *doubtful* Term, a *coarse* reject,
 Not *Aristarchus* can be more correct;
 Nor will he (*fondly* fearing to offend)
 Spare the *least* Trifle, and expose his Friend,

38 *A New TRANSLATION of*

For the most *trifling* Faults meet certain Shame,
If once the *publick* Censure blasts your Fame.

POETICK Madnefs is a *curs'd* Disease,
Loath'd like the *Leper's* Sores, or *Moon's* Increase ;
'Tis an *infectious* Evil most detest,
A wild' *fanatick* Rage that fires the Breast,
Hooted' by Boys, and made the Wiseman's Jest. }
Should such a *Frantick*, as he roams the Streets,
(Belching his fulsome Rhimes on all he meets,)
Slip like a Fowler *heedless* of his Pace,
Into some hidden Well, or loathsome Place,
Tho' he should bellow 'till his Throat were sore,
And ev'ry Passenger for Aid implore,
Not one in Charity would lend a Rope,
To help the *versifying* Madman up ;
Assistance might be useles ; how d'you know
But 'twas his Choice to fall, nay die below.

MARK

MARK the *Sicilian* Tale; 'tis somewhat odd,
Empedocles aspiring to a God,
 Plung'd into *Ætna*'s Flames *divinely* mad.
 May such *incorrigible* Sots as these
 Be priviledg'd to die whene'er they please;
 He, who preserves such Fools against their Will,
 Incurs as great a Guilt as they who kill:
 Nor was his *Fate* the rash Result of Thought,
 But a long-labour'd Whim, and often sought;
 Nay could th' *extravagant* revive, I doubt
 If it were possible to keep him out.

'Tis hard to guess for what enormous Crime
 Such *impious* Scriblers are *condemn'd* to Rhime,
 If for *Pollution* of their *Father's* Dust,
 Or *Sacrilege*, or vile *incestuous* Lust;
 'Tis certain, *Madness* throws 'em in the Fit,
 Like Bears broke loose, invading all they meet,

The

40 *A New TRANSEATION, &c.*

The *terzing* Fools become the common Dread,
Seize you without Remorse, and read you dead;
Like *Leeches* cling voracious of their Food,
Nor quit th' *inhuman* Hold, till gorg'd with Blood.

E N I S

